

Sandhills Crayfish

Procambarus pearsei

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DESCRIPTION

Taxonomy and Basic Description

The sandhills crayfish is a small species, cylindrical in shape, light brown in color with pastel highlights and often with dark speckles. The chelae are large but not robust (NCWRC 2005). Adult specimens examined in the process of writing the original description of the sandhills crayfish ranged from approximately 48 mm (1.9 inches) to 58 mm (2.3 inches) in length (Creaser 1934).

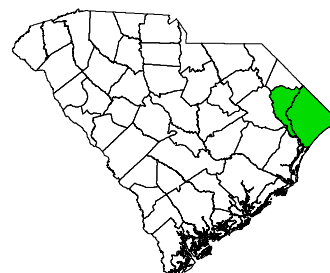


Status

NatureServe (2004) currently identifies the ranking of the sandhills crayfish as vulnerable (S3) in South Carolina and apparently stable (S4) in North Carolina.

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND SIZE

The majority of the range of the sandhills crayfish is in North Carolina, but it does extend into the Waccamaw and Lumber-Little Pee Dee River basins of South Carolina. It has been found in Marion and Horry Counties and is expected to occur in Dillon County.



HABITAT AND NATURAL COMMUNITY REQUIREMENTS

Generally, the sandhills crayfish is found in lentic waters and subterranean burrows. It is a secondary burrower (NCWRC 2005). Hobbs (1989) listed it as being found in streams, so it may be able to inhabit a wide variety of habitats.

CHALLENGES

Our experts recommend that the sandhills crayfish be designated as a species of special concern in South Carolina, due to an apparently restricted distribution. More research is needed on the habitat associations and distribution of this species before it can be determined if this ranking is appropriate.

CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

There are no significant conservation accomplishments for the sandhills crayfish at this time.

CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct research to determine the range, distribution and habitat requirements for the sandhills crayfish.
- Investigate the need to initiate the process to achieve South Carolina special concern status for the sandhills crayfish.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Collection of data that better describes the range, distribution and habitat requirements for the sandhills crayfish may be considered a measure of success.